

*Suffolk* A 13.  
Funeral Sermon;

Occasion'd by the

DEATH

Of the Reverend

Mr. Samuel Slater,

L A T E

Minister of the Gospel in L O N D O N.

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By W. T O N G. K

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L O N D O N:

Printed by H. Clark, for Whattoff Boulter, at the Angel, Bible  
and Crown in the Poultry. 1704.

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Minister of the Gospel in L O N D O N

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L O N D O N :

Printed by H. Clark, for H. and J. Baskin, at the Angel, Bill  
and Cross in the Strand. 1794.



DEDICATION.

TO THE

**Church of Christ,**

Lately under the

**PASTORAL CARE**

Of the Reverend

**Mr. Samuel Slater.**

Honoured Sirs,

**I** *was a great Respect you put upon me, when you invited me to Preach the Funeral Sermon for your late Excellent Pastor; But you had better consulted the Regards that were due to him, if you had put that Work into the Hands of one more Sufficient and Deserving.*

*And since you had so great Choice of such Persons at Hand, I know no Reason why that Office should*

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have fallen upon me, unless it be that you knew so well how little the Excellent Mr. Slater needed to be Beholden to human Art or Authority, to Recommend his Name and Memory to the World.

I believe you took me to be a Person that had a very great Value for him, and in that I am sure you were not Mistaken; I had the Happiness to know something of him many Years before I had the Honour to be known to him, and it was easie to observe the same Excellent Evangelical Spirit in him, which was the great Ornament of those aged Ministers, under whose Doctrin I had from my Childhood sate, and this constrain'd me to pay him a most sincere and hearty Veneration.

That numerous and truly solemn Assembly, in whose bearing this Sermon was preached, was an evident Proof of the great Interest Mr. Slater had in the Hearts of good People, in all Parts of London; it was an Instance of the Truth of that Promise: Those that Honour God, He will Honour; and yet how small a Matter was it, and how unworthy to be compared with that Glory, which the most high God puts upon his Faithful Servants within the Vaile.

The Backwardness that I discovered to comply with your Request for Printing this Sermon, was not pretended but real: I was never yet pleased with anything of my own, that came from the Press. The God whom we serve, may vouchsafe on such special and awful Occasions, to  
give



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give in some Life and Fervour in Preaching; but these are Things that can hardly be transmitted by Writing; and without them, it must be a much better Composure than mine, that does not prove a sort of a dead Letter.

Some particular Persons have been favour'd with an extraordinary Talent for this Work. Such a Vivacity of Thought, such Clearness of Sense, and Strength of Reason, expressing Spiritual and Experimental Things, with such Aptness and Easyness of Stile and Language, that their Sermons like Winter Greens, have still retained their Verdure and their vivid Colours, when, and which way soever they have been presented to you; their very Books have been taught to speak, and the Spirit of the Authors have liv'd and mov'd in their immortal Lines.

Of this Number (not to mention some that are now Living) were Dr. Sibbs, Mr. Bolton, Dr. Harris, Mr. Stephen Marshal, Mr. Jos. Symmonds, Mr. Jer. Burroughs, Mr. Baxter, Bishop Hopkins, and I think none more excelled than Mr. Gurnal in his compleat Christian Armour, and Dr. Owen on the 130 Psalm, there is something peculiar in these Great Men's Writings, which (like the lively Stroaks in a well drawn Picture) tho' you cannot tell how to describe, yet is the Beauty and Excellency of the Work, it is an Accomplishment which I greatly admire, and bless God for, wherever I see it; but for my own part, I know I have it not, and I am afraid never shall.

This



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*This plain Discourse comes and tenders it self to you at your Call, with this earnest Request, that where the Iron is blunt, you would put to more Strength. You have it as it was preached, with little Variation; the avow'd Design of it, is, to put you into the way to alleviate your Sorrows and your Loss, by retaining the best Part of your deceased Minister still with you; I mean that Excellent Spirit that made him so great a Blessing to you for so many Years, and made you so loath to part with him after you had so long enjoy'd him.*

*You will find, I have enlarged a little upon that Part of the Application, which concerns my Self and Brethren in the Ministry that have entred into the Places of those of the going Generation: I thought it not so proper to speak much on that Head before, because I spoke in the hearing of but a few that were so immediately concerned. It was far from my Design to undervalue any the Youngest or the Meanest of my Brethren; I can modestly say, my Temper and Practice has always been to Love and Honour them, and I bless God, and desire you to do so, that God has raised up so many, and qualified them so well for the Service of his Church, and yet I am convinced, it is our Duty to Exhort and Stir up one another, to get a greater Measure of the good Spirit of those that have gone before us.*

*Those of you that are Aged, would be glad to leave your Families and Children, under a serious lively Ministry, and a pure and powerful Gospel, you would willingly bequeath to them,*

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them, when you die, such Helps and Means for their Souls as you have enjoyed. I am persuaded, it is your Prayer that they may be nourished up with the sincere Milk of the Word, it is to back and second you in such Desires as these, that I have thus spoken to my Self and my Brethren. And if any of them should be so severe (which I am not willing to suspect) as with Eliab to impute it to the Pride and Naughtiness of my Heart, <sup>1 Sam. 17. 28, 29.</sup> David shall answer for me. What I have now done, is there not a Cause? If the Advice be not necessary, I am content to bear the Blame.

I could heartily Rejoyce, if some Person duly qualified for the Work, would give the World a more particular Account of the remarkable Passages of Mr. Slater's Life and Ministry, which I am persuaded, would be very acceptable, and very useful; but this could not be expected from me, who had only the Opportunity of observing the last Part of it, wherein he discovered so much Concern for the Church of God in the World, and such a sweet, placid, serene Temper of Spirit, with respect to his approaching Change, as did fully answer the Character of an Experienced faithful dying Minister.

And it was very pleasant to hear both Ministers and others, give such an honourable Testimony concerning him at his Funeral; some I heard say, whoever had been guilty of making Breaches and Divisions amongst the People of God in London, Mr. Slater could ne-



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wer be charged with it; and others observed, that he had gone through the World, with as clear and unspotted a Reputation, as any Man, that ever liv'd in this great City: It is really pity, but that such a Life so fitted with what is imitable and praise-worthy, should be brought again to the view of the World, and left upon perpetual Record; however, that you who were his beloved People, may continually possess his Spirit, and reap the Fruit of that good Seed he has Sown amongst you, and so may meet him with Comfort, when the great Shepherd shall appear; is the Prayer of,

Your very Affectionate

SERVANT,

W. TONG.

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A  
S E R M O N

Preach'd on the Occasion of the  
Much Lamented D E A T H  
O F

Mr. Samuel Slater.

**I** Am really sensible, my Friends, you have called me this Day to a very hard Work. I find already a great deal of Difference betwixt coming up into this Pulpit, to lend my weak Help to your excellent Pastor, whilst he was alive; and coming hither now, to put you in mind of what you have lost by his Death; the former I have done with Pleasure, but my present Work lies very heavy upon me. I do heartily sympathize with you, and could much easier be your Fellow-Mourner, than your Monitor, upon this Occasion. But while we go forth Weeping, we must not forget, to bear our precious Seed. It was the Observation of an eminent Minister from hence, that Sorrow must not hinder Duty, Weeping must not hinder Sowing: Let me therefore bespeak your Attention to that Word of God you find in the 2 Kings, 2 Ch. 9th and 10th Verses.

*' And it came to pass when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, What shall I do for thee, before I be taken away from thee?'*

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*' thee? And Elisha said, I pray thee let a double Portion of thy Spirit be upon me; and he said, thou hast asked a hard Thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken away from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.*

We have here some of the last Words of the great Prophet *Elijah*, a Person who lived in the World, and went out of the World in a very extraordinary manner; he was one of those two that had the peculiar Favour, to go entirely and altogether to Heaven at once, only dropping his Mantle, but not his Flesh, and was present with the Lord, without ever being absent from the Body with a *non obstante* to the Laws and Powers of Death.

*Enoch* and *Elijah* left the World, as Men would have done, if they had never sinned; and as those Saints shall do, that shall remain alive at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, only with this Difference; Christ sent his Convoy for the former, but for the latter, he will come himself from Heaven to fetch them thither, *John* 14. 3.

By these Instances, God would teach his People, how evil and how bitter a thing it is, that they have departed from the Lord, and from their Original Integrity? How Sweet and Happy would our Days here on Earth have been, if we had not sinned; and how easily and honourably should we have been removed from Paradise to Heaven, as from one Room to another? But now we are become liable to a thousand Miseries in Life; and the greatest Conflict of all comes at last, when even those that go to Heaven, must first be cut in sunder; and as an ingenious Person expresses it, must *go downward to the Sky*. The Body is dead because of Sin, even where the Spirit is Life because of Righteousness.

And yet, by what God did for *Enoch* and *Elijah*, he has assured his People, that a way is found out for the Satisfaction of Divine Justice, and that the Death of Believers is not the Effect of vindictive Wrath, but a proper Method of that wise and holy Government, which God exercises over a sinful World; and by this we know, that in Heaven, there are Mansions for the Bodies as well as the Souls of the Saints, and that their whole Persons shall at length be translated thither, and be as compleatly Happy as those that never tasted Death. This Case therefore, as  
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extraordinary as it was, affords Matter of common Instruction and Comfort to all the People of God.

The Words of *Elijah* at such a time, and spoken to such a Person as his Schollar, *Elisha* must needs deserve our most serious Consideration. *Elijah* was now finishing his Testimony, and *Elisha* more solemnly entring upon his, the Persons and the Circumstances were such, that nothing which was not very Excellent could be expected from them.

*Elisha* had been brought into the School and Service of *Elijah* by an extraordinary Call; you may read it in *1 Kings 19. 19.* and he had faithfully and constantly Ministred unto him. It was discovered to him, (and the rest of the Sons of the Prophets,) that *Elijah* must be speedily taken away from him. The Expectation of so sudden and so extraordinary a Parting, made *Elisha* resolve to keep as close to his Master as ever he could: He was impatient of the least Interruption from the Sons of the Prophets, he would not have his Eye, or Ear, or Thoughts, diverted from the strictest Attendance to every thing that *Elijah* did, or said; expecting, that they could not part till something extraordinary had passed betwixt them; and what that was, the Words of the Text will tell you. *Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee; and Elisha said, I pray thee let a double Portion of thy Spirit be upon me, and he said, thou hast asked a hard thing, &c.* *2 Kin Ch. 1.*

That this Portion of Scripture, may through the Grace of God be Profitable to us all, for Doctrin—and for Instruction in Righteousness. I would,

1. Divide and Explain the several Parts of it.
2. Raise some Doctrinal Propositions from it; and,
3. Apply it, chiefly to the sorrowful Occasion of this Day's Solemnity.

I. For the Division and Explanation of this Passage, you may therein observe.

1. *Elijah's* generous Proposal.
2. *Elisha's* prudent Request.
3. *Elijah's* remarkable Answer.



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I. *Elijah's* great and generous Proposal to *Elisha*, *Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken away from thee.* A strange Expression, as if *Elijah* could do what he pleased for *Elisha*, as if he had every desirable Thing at his Dispose, Is it not the Prerogative of God to *command the Blessing*, can the best of Men do any more than *beg it* for themselves and others? What means *Elijah* then to draw such a Dependance upon himself, as if it were in his *Hand to give*, whatever *Elisha* could find in his *Heart to ask*? But this may be easily accounted for if we consider.

1. That *Elijah* had an Extraordinary Spirit of Prayer; he is proposed as a Pattern to us in that Respect, *James* 5. 16, 17. he could bring down both Judgment and Blessings by Prayer, for as a Prince he had Power with God. And they that have the Golden Key of Prayer, and know how to use it, may go to all the Treasures of Divine Grace, not only for themselves, but for their Friends; It is good to have an Interest in those, that have an Interest in the Throne of Grace; God has made it our Duty to Pray one for another, and it is not a vain Thing unless we make it so by doing it vainly. It is a dangerous Thing to have the Prayers of God's People lie against us, but an unspeakable Privilege to have them engaged for us. *Elisha* had an Interest in the King of *Judah*, and he offered the *Shunamite* to employ it on her Behalf, *2 Kings* 4. 13. 'Behold thou hast been careful for us with all this Care, what is to be done for thee, wouldst thou be spoken for to the King, or the Captain of the Host, but she answered, I live amongst my own People. I am contented with my Lott and Station, and need not the Favour of the King or the Captain of the Host; but none can say they need not the Favour of God, nor should we be Content without it; that good *Shunamite*, that cared not for the Interest that the Prophet had in the King and the Captain of the Host, yet highly valued his Interest in God, and was very desirous that he would speak unto God for her. *Elijah* had often had occasion to try his Interest with God, and always found it sure and good, and therefore depended upon it, that if *Elisha* asked any Thing that was suitable for him, he should obtain it of God on his Behalf. But here we see, whatever we would ask of the Servants of God, must

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must be asked before they be taken away from us, we have no Warrant, no Encouragement to apply our selves to them, when they are gone into the other World, *Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee.*

II. *Elijah* had not only the Spirit of Prayer, but of Prophecy too; and we have Reason to believe, he was prompted by the Spirit of Prophecy, to make this Proposal to *Elisba*, and had some good Assurance, That the Divine Favour and Presence would not be wanting to give an honourable Witness and Efficacy to *Elijah's* Last Blessing. There was usually something Prophetical in the Blessings of the Patriarchs, and tho' they were not all Prophets by Office, yet when they came to leave the World, they were Conscious of a Divine Inspiration, for that very purpose of *Blessing their Posterity concerning Things to come*; and we need not wonder to find it so with *Elijah*, who was one of the most famous Prophets of all the Old Testament, a Prophet by Office, and highly favoured, with a constant and mighty Presence of the Spirit of Prophecy, and we may be assured, it would not leave him to fall into the Snare and Folly of vain Confidence at such an extraordinary Juncture, by making a Proposal, which, when accepted, should come to nothing; he must never leave the Earth, under such a Reproach, that was going to Heaven, with so great Triumph and Glory.

2. Observe here *Elisba's* prudent Request. *I pray thee that a double Portion of thy Spirit may be upon me.* here are two Questions that will Occur to our Thoughts upon *Elisba's* Petition.

1. Why does he ask that of a Man that was the peculiar Gift of God? But this is answered by what has been already said, the same Reasons that would warrant *Elijah* in making such a Proposal, would warrant *Elisba* in making such a Request. He knew that his Master had that effectual fervent Spirit, that mightily prevailed with God, and he believed, that the kind Proposal *Elijah* made, was suggested by the Spirit of God, who had given a more than ordinary Power to departing Patriarchs and Prophets, to Bless those that were to succeed them.



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them in their Place and Work ; so that tho' *Elisba's* Desire was immediately directed to *Elijah*, yet his Dependance was upon God, and into the Divine Power and Goodness that Faith and Prayer of his was ultimately resolved.

2. What did *Elisba* mean to make so great a Demand as a double Portion of *Elijah's* Spirit? It may be sufficient to say his Master did not limit him in the Proposal, and he had no Reason to limit himself in his Request, when he had such Scope and such Room given, *Ask what I shall do for thee* ; why should he be straitned in himself. It would have been a Disparagement not only to *Elijah*, but to the God of *Elijah*, as well as an Injury to himself, to have asked some little Thing, when he had Liberty to ask so much.

Some have thought, it did not so well consist with the Modesty and Humility of *Elisba*, to desire a Portion of that Spirit double to what *Elijah* had ; and therefore they suppose he only meant a Portion of the Spirit double to what the rest of the surviving Prophets should have. They take it thus, *Elisba* expected that the Spirit of *Elijah* (his extraordinary Gifts of Prayer, Prophecy and Miracles) would upon his Departure, he being their great Father, be distributed amongst the Sons of the Prophets, and *Elisba* begs that he might have the Priviledge of the First-Born, the double Portion, not of his Estate, there is no mention made of that, nor does it appear that he had any, but of his Spirit, the powerful *Charismata*, by which he had seen him just now divide the strong and rapid Streams of *Jordan*.

*in* But I could never see any cogent Reason to depart from the plain and obvious Sense of the Words. I am very well satisfied, the Thing that *Elisba* desired, was a Measure of Gifts and Graces double to what *Elijah* had possessed. And this he might do without any vain and culpable Ambition ; the things he desired, were of a Spiritual Nature, those *best Gifts which we are commanded earnestly to covet*, 1 Cor. 12. 31. His Design in making such a Request was, that he might be able to bring the more Honour and Glory to the Name of God, and more effectually to support the sinking Interest of Religion in that degenerate Age ; he knew the things he desired were to come from God, and he could not  
desire



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desire more than God was able to give—there was a great deal of Wisdom and Piety in this Request of his, *I pray thee that a double Portion of thy Spirit may be upon me.*

3. We have *Elijah's* remarkable Answer; '*Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken away from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so unto thee.* And the Answer is very remarkable for these two Things.

1. The Surprize that *Elijah* seems to be in, at this Request, *Thou hast asked a hard thing—thou hast been hard in asking—* it seems hereby, he knew not what *Elisba* would ask, and he could not from himself positively assure him, that his Request was granted; and thus the great God wisely ordered the Matter, that it might appear, that himself over-ruled both the Spirit of *Elijah*, in making such a Proposal, and the Spirit of *Elisba* in making such a Request, and that he alone was able to give the Blessing desired; that without him, the best of Men are at a loss, and can do nothing. *Every good and perfect Gift is from above, and cometh from the Father of Lights.* Prophets and Preachers are but Earthen Vessels, have not their Springs in themselves, can give out no Blessings to others, but what God first gives into them. *Tho' the Spirit of the Prophets be subject to the Prophets,* as to the rational and regular Exercise of it; yet it is not so subject, as to be transferr'd and bequeath'd by them, to whom they please; they are only the Ufu-fructuaries of it, the Propriety and Reversion is the Lord's; *He alone hath the Residue of the Spirit,* Mal. 2. 15.

2. The Sign given to *Elisba*, whereby he should know whether his Request were answered or no. *If thou see me when I am taken up from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so.* This Sign was undoubtedly suggested to *Elijah* by the Spirit of God; for only he that could give the Blessing, could give the Sign, and it was delivered dubiously and conditionally, to make *Elisba* more desirous of it, and more intent and diligent in waiting for it.

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The Sight of *Elijah* at his Translation, could not be the natural Cause of *Elisba's* enjoying the double Portion of his Spirit, it was only a Sign, and an arbitrary instituted Sign, and yet there seems to be something of an Aptitude in it, to the thing signified, intimating, that God would give *Elisba* the double Portion of the Spirit, as a Reward of his Fidelity and Diligence in keeping so close to his Master as he had done, and that the Views of *Elijah's* Assention so gloriously to Heaven, would fill *Elisba* with that Faith, and Love, and Zeal, and Joy, as would eminently dispose him to receive that double Portion of the Spirit, which he so much desired. Gods instituted Signs, are always wisely and well chosen, and have not only a Fitness to confirm the Promise, but to prepare the Heart for it. I proceed in the,

Second Place, to raise some Doctrinal Propositions from this famous Passage of Scripture; and they are such as these:

1. *When the Faithful Servants of God have fulfilled their Days, and finished their Work, they shall be received up into their Master's Joy and Glory.* The Time was now come, that God would take *Elijah up into Heaven*, V. 1. God's Witnesses in the World, have an appointed Time for the finishing of their Testimony; and when that Time is expir'd, God will take them to himself. They shall not all go as *Elijah* did, Body and Soul together; but they shall all go to the same God, and to the same Heaven. God does not always send Chariots of Fire and a Whirlwind, but he never fails to send the Chariots of Salvation, and a Guard of Angels to convey his Servants safe to himself: And tho' in some of them, when Soul and Body part, the Body may be full of Pains, and the Soul of Fears, yet as soon as ever the Vital Knott is unty'd, the Soul finds it self wrapt up into the third Heavens, in Joy unspeakable, and full of Glory.

The Servants of God may sometimes think their Work is done, before it be so, and may wish to be gone before the time; thus did *Elijah* himself, 1 Kings 19. 4. *He requested that he might die, and said, it is enough, O Lord, take away my Life, for I am not better than my Fathers;* but their Times are in God's Hands, and he will give them a fair Dismission in the fittest Season; thus he dealt with *Daniel*, and thus he will do for them all, Dan. 12.

Ch.



Ch. 9, and 13. *Go thy way Daniel — for thou shalt rest and stand in thy Lot at the end of the Days.*

And when they have serv'd God faithfully on Earth, they shall Live and Reign with him in Heaven. Their great Lord, whose they are, and whom they serve, has provided no worse a Place for them, than for himself, *John 12. 26. Where I am, there shall my Servant be; if any Man serve me, him will my Father honour.* This is a strange Word, and goes surprizingly high; and yet there is another Text that seems to rise higher still, in *Luke 12. 37. Blessed are those Servants, whom their Lord, when he comes, shall find watching. Verily I say unto you, that He shall gird himself, and make them to sit down at Meat, and shall come forth and serve them.* Let all the Servants of God, Hear, and Believe, and Wonder, what Christ in Glory serve you, to gird himself, and come forth and serve you? Oh! never then for Shame, let the Servants of God stick at any Difficulties that may attend his Service now. Some of you have Servants of your own, and when they have been working hard all the Day, are content to sit down in a dark Corner at Night; and if they can but have a kind Word and a cheerful Countenance from you, they are very well pleased: But the Servants of God shall not be put off after this manner, where Christ himself is, there shall his Servants be, and he will gird himself and come forth and serve them; that is, he will put them into the Possession of all the Glories of Heaven, and will secure the Possession thereof unto them. Who now can forbear to say, How good a Master is this, and how Happy are these his Servants, how well employed on Earth, and how richly rewarded in Heaven?

2 *When good Men leave the World, they are desirous to leave a Blessing behind them in it. Ask what shall I do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. Elijah was now just a going to the Realms of Light, and Love, and Joy; the Prospect thereof must needs be most delightful to him, and yet He was not so transported and swallowed up with it, as to forget his Friends and Brethren that were to stay behind him; He left them with dear and tender Affections, and most hearty Desires, that they might do well, and be well, when he was gone from them. Goodness is the very*

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Nature and Principle of good Men, they would be doing good as long as they can do any thing, and are careful to do those Things fore they die, that may produce good Effects when they are gone; and they would not only have their good Works to follow them to Heaven, as Evidences of their Love to God, but to abide also on Earth in good Effects, as Evidences of their good Will to Men.

11. It is recorded of *Jacob*, That when he was a dying, he Blessed the two Sons of *Joseph*, and Worshiped leaning upon the Top of his Staff: The two finishing Acts of his Life, were Worshiping his God, and Blessing his Posterity. And no Man can desire, that his last Hours should be better fill'd up, than in doing Acts of Worship and Honour to the glorious God, and of Love and good Will unto Men. The Praise and Glory that dying Saints owe to the God to whom they are going, cannot make them forget the Love and good Will they owe to those whom they leave behind them in an evil World.

Wil- of rwick. It was a very remarkable thing, I once heard a dying Saint and Minister say to his sorrowful Relations that stood weeping about him, *Do not take it unkindly from me, that I am so willing to leave you, my Affections towards you are not less than formerly, but greater than ever, only they are overpower'd by stronger Affections of another Nature; and I hope I shall never forget what I heard from an Eminent Servant of God still living, at a time, when to himself, and all about him, he seemed to be expiring; Now my Heavenly Father calls me, and I gladly ascend to him; yet, I do not leave the World as one that is weary of Service in it, nor as one that has no good Wishes for it. I believe God has great Designs of Love and Mercy for this sinful World, which he will more fully discover, when the Time appointed in his Eternal Counsels shall come.*

r. Wil- ts of udley. Another very Excellent Minister that died young, (I had it from one that heard him,) express'd himself thus; *I bless God I am well satisfied of my Interest in the Love of God through Christ, and now my whole Business is to get my Soul more fill'd with Love to God, and Love to all Mankind; it is this, that I am now striving and labouring for, that the Grace of Love, universal Love and Charity maybe perfected.*

And



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And indeed, it is no Wonder to find this Temper of Spirit in departing Saints ; the nearer they come to the World of Love, the more they will be transformed into the Nature of it ; the Streams of Love to God, zeal for his Glory, and the Happiness of his Church will run deeper and stronger the nearer they come to the Ocean. When *Moses* beheld himself dying in the Wilderness, he composed that Prayer which we have in the 90 Psalm, in which he earnestly desires, *That the Work of God might Live when he was Dead*, that great Work of settling his People in a Land of Rest, v. 16. *Let thy Work appear to thy Servants, and thy Glory to their Children* : Let not this good Work die with us ; if we must not live to see the glorious Accomplishment of it, let it appear to our Children. Tho' the World is generally unkind to good Men yet they are bent upon doing good in it while they live, and they wish well to it when they die ; this their Charity is the Bond of Perfectness.

3. While one Generation of good Men are finishing their Course, God is raising up another, that may enter into their Labours, and inherit their Blessing. The Glorious Angels before the Throne of God, have no Period fixed to their Service ; their Nature is Immortal, always abiding in the same Individuals ; but the Human Nature is become a frail and dying Thing, and therefore both the Church and Mankind in general, is continued by successive Generations, one passing away, and another coming, *Zach* Our Fathers where are they, and the Prophets do not Live for ever. *Eccle* Now the Promise of Christ to his Church, is, *That instead of 4. Fathers, she shall have Children that shall be as Princes on the Earth*, Ps. 45. 16. and it is his declared Purpose, that a Seed shall serve him, and it shall be accounted to the Lord for a Generation, Ps. 22. 30.

When the Time drew near, that *Moses* the Servant of God must die, *Joshua* was set a-part, and prepared to succeed him in his Work, and to perfect his Design. And here, when *Elijah* was to be taken up into Heaven, *Elisha* must first be trained up under him, for the same Ministry. Our Saviour has told us, *He has built his Church upon a Rock, and all the Gates of Hell* *Mat* *shall not prevail against it*, by the Gates of Hell some under- *18.*

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stand Death and the Grave, Death shall not prevail against the Church, for when the aged Servants of God, shall receive *their Crowns*, others shall receive *the Unction*, to fit them for the Work that then devolves upon them; and when God thus changes Hands and Instruments, He more plainly shews, *That the Excellency of the Power is of Himself, and not of Man*; He has committed an immortal Ministry to mortal Men, and tho' *all Flesh be Grass, and all the Glory of Man as the Flower of Grass, and the Grass withereth, and the Flower thereof falleth away, yet the Word of the Lord endureth for ever, and this is the Word which by the Gospel is Preached unto us.*

While God has a Work to do in the World, he can never want Instruments to do it by, for he is the God of the Spirits of all Flesh. The Lord is the Shepherd of his People, and he takes care to provide Under-Shepherds, He has instituted the Ministry, for the perfecting of the Body of Christ, and he will preserve the Ministry till that mystical Body be perfected, *and till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man unto the Measure of the Stature of the fulness of Christ.* In those Days when the Ministry was Prophetical, there were the *Schools of the Prophets*, Nurseries set apart, to Train up Persons in the Knowledge of sacred Things, and out of these Schools God usually chose the Prophets that he sent out to his People, and whilst they were in those Schools, God revealed Things to them gradually to fit them for further Service; and by these means it was, that these Sons of the Prophets could tell *Elisha*, that his Master must be taken up from his Head that same Day. And if one that was not of the Sons of the Prophets, was called to that Ministry, it was looked upon as an extraordinary Call, even at that Day, as appears by the Words of *Amos*, Ch. 7. V. 14, 15. *I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophet's Son, but an Herdsman, and the Lord took me from following the Flock, &c.* He there argues from his extraordinary Call, to the special Obligation he was under, to deliver God's Message, whoever should say the contrary. The Care of God is still the same for his Church, he has his Nurseries still where he is Planting and Watering, and preparing Young Persons, to fill up the Places of those that are finishing  
their



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their Course, and the Ministry they have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God. 24.

4. *Those that succeed the faithful Servants of God, in the same Place and Work, should earnestly desire the same Spirit.* Thus did *Elisba* when he was put to his Choice, he had observed in *Elijah*, an excellent Spirit, excellent Gifts and Graces, and he rather desired such a Spirit than all the Wealth and Honour in the World. And it is no wonder, if those that have the same Work to do, desire to have the same Spirit for the doing of it; for Actions proceed from Principles, and such as Men's Spirits are, such will their Works be; One Man can never fill up the Place of another, unless he have the same Help and Strength from God. They that expect to have it, cannot think much to desire it, and with such Desires God is well pleased.

When God appeared unto *Solomon*, and put him to his Choice, Ask what shall I give thee, He could never have asked a Thing more pleasing to God, than that *the same Mercy which God had shewed unto David his Father, might be shewed to him also, that he might Walk uprightly, and Govern wisely, 1 Kings Ch. 3. V. 5, and 6.* And when he had his Wish, in an eminent measure of Wisdom, He again prays to the same purpose, for his People as well as himself, at the Dedication of the Temple, *The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our Fathers, 1 Kings 8. 57.* And the People of *Israel* knew not how better to express their Honour and Affection to *Joshua* than by Praying, *The Lord thy God be with thee as he was with Moses, Joshua 1. 17.* We are ready to Honour thee as we did *Moses*, only the Lord thy God give thee the same Wisdom, and help of Grace, that *Moses* had. And those Men can neither expect the same Honour, nor the same Success that their pious Predecessors have had, who do not endeavour after the same excellent Spirit.

5. *It is a just and commendable Ambition, to strive to Excel those that have gone before us, in the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of God, I pray thee let a double Portion of thy Spirit be upon me.* This was *Elisba's* Option, and tho' *Elijah* told him he had asked a hard thing, he did not tell him he had done ill in asking it. It was

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was a hard thing, because a great and excellent thing ; and the Design of *Elijah*, in his Reply, was not to check and condemn *Elisba's* Choice, but rather to quicken and whet his Desire.

*Elisba* had good Reason to ask a double Portion of *Elijah's* Spirit, that wherein *Elijah* had done amiss (and he was a Man of some Passions) he might Act aright ; and wherein *Elijah* had done well, he might still do better. God does not give so great a Measure of his Spirit to one, but he can give more to another ; those that have the most, are ready to acknowledge, *they have not attained, neither are they already perfect*. None but the Head of the Church ever receive the Spirit without Measure, in all its Fulness and Immensity ; and he has never said, he would give his Servants just so much of it, and no more ; but he has made it the Duty of his People, to follow after, *if they may apprehend that, for which also they are apprehended of Christ Jesus* ; and has charged them *not to be drunk with Wine, in which there is Excess, but be filled with the Spirit*. They must keep themselves within Bounds, as to sensual Delights ; but he has left them to their Liberty, to take in it as much of the Spirit as ever they can.

This Request of *Elisba*, for the double Portion of the Spirit, was so far from being displeasing to God, that it appears to be dictated by God himself, who foresaw that *Elisba* would have need of it, for the Age was growing still more wicked and corrupt than ever, and *Elisba* had the dangerous Snares of Prosperity and Honour to encounter, which oftentimes prove more fatal than those of Adversity. This *St. Austin* offers as the Reason why *Elisba* was directed to make such a Request. *Elisæus cum magno honore & seculi dignitate Prophetia donum habuit, Elias profugus fuit & persecutus.*

Now wherever this is the Case, that a Nation abounds at once with Prosperity and Wickedness, we had need to pray for a double Portion of the Spirit of God, that we may keep our selves faithful, and unspotted from the World.

It is no Disparagement to those Excellent ones, that are gone, and going before us, to desire a greater Measure of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit of God. *David* did not think himself affronted by his People, when they came to visit him on his Death.



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Death-Bed, and said, *God make the Name of Solomon better than thy Name, and his Throne greater than thy Throne.* David could heartily say *Amen* to that Prayer, for so we Read; *He bowed himself upon the Bed*; he liked the Prayer well, and gave his full Assent to it. It is observable, when the Servants of David came to him, on this Occasion, the Text says, *They came to Bless their Lord King David, and said, God make the Name of Solomon better than thy Name,* and David took this as a Blessing to himself, and was very well pleased with it. The most eminent of God's aged Servants, are truly desirous, that those who are coming up, may do God more and better Service than they have done; and yet it is to be feared, there are but few that will do so well; and that brings me to the last Proposition.

6. *This double Portion of the Spirit is the Gift of God alone, not to be obtained without strong Desires, and great Diligence: Elijah said, thou hast asked a hard Thing.* Such a Spirit is the Gift of God alone, for it is God's Spirit; *Elijah* was lead and acted by it, and therefore it is called his Spirit; but he only had it to use, not to give. The Faithful Servants of God would be glad to bequeath this Excellent Spirit to their Successors, if it were in their Power, but they know it is not; they can leave their Estates as they please, but their Gifts and Graces, upon their Demise, return to God that gave them, and there is so much less left in the World till there be a new Effusion of the Spirit. *Elisha* begs that *Elijah* would make him his Heir, give him the double Portion; but *Elijah* lets him understand, he asked that which did not descend by Inheritance, he must have it by a new Donation from the great Father of the Spirits.

When *Moses* knew that He must die in the Wilderness, before the great Work of settling the People of *Israel* in *Canaan* was finished, how earnestly did he pray that God would provide a suitable Person to succeed him, *Num. 27. 16, 17. Let the Lord the God of the Spirits of all Flesh set a Man over the Congregation, &c.* he applies himself to God as *the God of the Spirits of all Flesh*, the former and fashioner of the Spirits of Men within them, whilst they are in the Flesh, and who alone can fit the Spirits of Men, to the People and Places, and Work, and Day, which

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which he has appointed them unto. And we often Read, when God called Persons to any special Service, *the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, another Spirit was given to them.* When the Spirit of Prophecy came upon Saul, the People wondered at it, that such a Young Man as he had been, should be amongst the Prophets, *Is Saul also amongst the Prophets?* But some of them wisely answered, *Who is their Father?* Why should you wonder to find Saul amongst the Prophets, who is the Father of the Prophets, is it not God, and cannot he give the Spirit to whom he pleases; yes certainly, He can give it, and none but He.

But this is a Gift, not frequently bestowed, few are so Happy as to obtain the double Portion of that Wisdom and Grace that shined in their pious Predecessors; some few Instances there may be, *Josbua* does as well in *Canaan* as *Moses* did in the Wilderness, and *Elisba* did more Miracles than *Elijah*; but it is not often so, seldom comes a better. Those aged *Jews* that had seen the first Temple in its Glory, could not forbear Weeping when they saw how far the second fell short of it. Others thought the second Temple was a very fine Place; but they that had seen the first, could not admire the second; they owned it as a Mercy, that they had a Temple, but it was not like the first. The rising Generation are ever prone to admire themselves, and think they do extraordinary Things; but those that were well acquainted with the Generation foregoing, are grieved to see so little of their excellent Spirit remaining upon those that are come into their Places.

This double Portion of the Spirit is not to be expected without great Difficulties and Diligence; if *Elisba* had not followed his Master very faithfully and constantly, and if he had not desired his Spirit above all earthly Things, he had never had it. God does not use to crown sloathful careless Souls with so great a Blessing; it is a rich Treasure, but it lies deep, and there must be digging and searching for it, before we can expect to enjoy it.

I come now to the last and most difficult part of this Work, and that is, to apply what has been said suitably to this sorrowful Occasion: Tho' the Case was in it self extraordinary, it is  
full



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full of common Instruction at all times, and especially in our Days. And,

1. From what has been observed, we may infer, *What an honourable thing it is for Persons to be filled with the good Spirit of God*; it makes them to excel, it renders them the illustrious Objects of Praise and Imitation. Happy are they that so Live and Act in the World, as that all wise and good Men shall cover to be like them. You may think, Sirs, the way to be admired and honoured, is to be rich and great in the World; and it is true, many will Praise you when you do well for your selves; but the surest way to be desired while you live, and lamented and honoured when you die, is to be truly Wise and Good; this renders you a shining Example to present and future Times, it draws the Eyes and the Estimation of all those towards you, that know any thing of the Difference betwixt Good and Evil: It was, and always will be the great Honour of Caleb, *That he was of an Excellent Spirit, and followed the Lord fully*, Num. 14. 24. It was not by their Riches, but by their Faith and Holiness, that the Elders obtained that good Report mentioned in the 11. Heb. V. 2.

2. Learn hence, *How much you lose, by the Death of those, in whom this Excellent Spirit was found*. When such Persons are taken away from us, as had an eminent Measure of Wisdom and Grace, a praying Spirit, a zealous, faithful Spirit, we may well look and lament after them, as *Elisba* here did. *My Father, my Father, the Chariots of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof*, the Glory of *Jacob* waxes thin, and much of our Strength and Defence is departed from us. The Death of such Persons makes a wide Gap and Breach upon our Hedge, and opens a way for a Deluge of Sin and Misery, especially if there should be but few found to stand in the Gap.

The Generation of good Men, Ministers and others, that are gone, and going off the Stage, had generally speaking, a very Excellent Spirit; there are so very few of them left, that I hope none can suspect me to be guilty of Flattery in what I say of them. The way of Flatterers is to court the rising, and not the

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the setting Sun; But we owe this Acknowledgment to their eminent Piety, Humility and Candor, and to the great Benefits we reap from their exemplary Faithfulness to God and Man. It is to them under God, that we owe what is yet left of practical and serious Religion, which with much Difficulty, they have endeavoured to keep alive in Times of great Impiety and Corruption; it is to them under God, that we owe our present Liberty of Conscience, and Purity of Ordinances; for if they had given up these most valuable Things by mean and sinful Compliances, we had never enjoy'd them at this Day; they have taken care to transmit them to us, at the Expence not only of their Labours, but Sufferings too, and therefore they are worthy of double Honour. But as for these our *Fathers*, where are they? Most of them gone, and the rest a going. The Church of God in our Days, has but too much Cause to take up that Lamentation in the 7th Micah 1. V. *Woe is me! For I am as when they have gathered the Summer Fruits as the Grape Gleanings of the Vintage, and my Soul desired the first Ripe Fruit, the good Man is perished from the Earth, &c.*

We lament this Day the Departure of an Aged and Excellent Servant of God; the Tender, the Faithful, the Loving and Beloved Pastor of this Congregation for many Years; one of an Excellent Spirit, a True Christian Primitive Spirit, one of the old Stamp, that bore the lively Image and Impression of his great Master upon him, in his Measure Holy, Harmless and Undeified, and now separated from Sinners. It is too late for us to apply our selves to him, that he would pray for us, for a double Portion of his Spirit, but it is not too late to apply our selves to God for it, and be exhorted,

**I. Always to remember, what an Excellent Spirit your departed Minister was gifted and adorned with.** It was that same truly Puritanical Spirit that so eminently appeared in the Generality of God's aged Servants, that are gone, and going off the Stage. You know much better than I can tell you, what he was, and how he did excell, only let me engage you often to consider it, and always to remember it.

1. He



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1. He was a Person of a *Gracious Spirit*, and so generally were our elder Sort of Ministers and Professors, eminently Gracious; and this indeed, is the true Beauty of all their other Qualifications. Your Minister, and the rest of his Brethren, have approved themselves Persons of real, unaffected, undissembled Piety, their Hearts were right with God, and entirely devoted to him, they believed, and therefore spoke, and were Baptized into the Truths they preached to us, *delivered into the Form of Doctrine*, which they delivered to their Hearers; their Natural and Moral Qualifications were Sanctified by true Grace, as every thing in the Temple was overlaid with pure Gold; this made them so diligent in their Master's Work, and so Zealous for his Glory, that this was the Spirit of your Pastor, you know very well, by the genuine Fruits of it, in the whole of his Conversation amongst you.

2. He was a Person of a *Judicious, Discerning Spirit*, one that had his Senses exercised to distinguish betwixt Good and Evil; you know he was a *Workman that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*. And this is the just Character of his other aged Brethren, of those that are gone, and those that are left; they could discern the Excellency of Purity in Worship, Soundness in Doctrine, the true Bounds of Christian Liberty, from the Yoak of Ceremonies and Inventions of Men. Your Pastor was one of those that had the noble Spirit of the *Berrians*, would not teach for Doctrines the Traditions of Men, but would search these Scriptures, and bring every thing to that Test and Touchstone; and this will always be a great Excellency wherever it is found.

3. He was a Person of a *Candid and Courteous Spirit*, in this few ever excelled the Reverend Mr. Slater; he always treated his Friends with the truest and most unaffected Civility, even the younger Ministers that were every way so much his Inferiors; And this most amiable and recommending Qualification has very eminently appeared in our aged Ministers and Christians, how ready have they always been to think the best, and speak the best of every one, how candid a Construction would they put upon the Actions of others, even whilst they were the strictest Observers of their Own.

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4. He was one of a *Humble Self-denying Spirit*, one that rather chose to suffer Affliction with the People of God, than to enjoy those Pleasures and Preferments which he could not come at without trampling upon the Light and Authority of his own Conscience; He, and the rest of his Brethren, did not mind high Things, but knew how to condescend to Men of low Degree; and this is the great Ornament of the Christian Profession, a Plain, but a most comely Cloathing.

5. He was one of an *Open, Plain, sincere Spirit*, without Disguise, and this was the genuine Spirit of the Servants of God in the last Generation, their Motto may very well be, that which Holy Mr. Trench used, *In Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not with fleshy Wisdom, but by the Grace of God* they were both Strangers and Enemies to a Vain, hollow deceitful Spirit, as most contrary to the Temper and Design of the Gospel.

6. He was one of a *Tender Affectionate Spirit*, He loved you, and you loved him, it will be remembered to your Praise, what tender Affections there were in this Church betwixt Pastor and People; and yet he did not confine his Love to you, but was a most affectionate Friend to all his Brethren and Acquaintance, and in this he was of the same Mind and Spirit with the rest of the Servants of God of his standing, the Lord grant that *Brotherly Love may still continue*.

7. He was one of a *Grave and Serious Spirit*, becoming his Character and his Office, his Countenance and Deportment at once invited your Acquaintance, and commanded your Respect; and this was not his Ornament alone, but very plainly to be seen in the rest of his aged Fellow-Servants, a most becoming Gravity, Solidity and Composedness, shewed it self in their Discourse, in their Countenances, and the whole of their Conversation, and this not merely owing to their Age, or to their Infirmities, but to their Wisdom and Piety. And yet,

8. He was a Person of a *Contented, Thankful, Cheerful Spirit*, Free, but not Frothy, Grave but not Morose. He knew as well



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as most Men Living, how to keep the *Decorous* mean, betwixt a foolish Levity, and an affected Reservedness, which never did, nor ever will recommend Religion to the World. His Mercies he always owned with great Thankfulness, and his Afflictions he endured with exemplary Patience; and by the same excellent Spirit, God has led his aged Servants through their Work and Course, with such chearful Resignation to his Holy Will in all Things, as calls aloud to us, who are risen up after them, not to be Sloathful, but Followers of those, who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promises. Therefore,

2. Let me *recommend such a Spirit as this to my Self and Others.* The Person of this excellent Man, we have no longer with us, we shall see his Face no more till the Resurrection-Day, but let us by no means part with his Spirit, the essential Spirit is fled away, and is without Question with the Spirits of Just Men made Perfect; but his excellent Qualifications and Christian Temper, we should all endeavour to retain. And these I would Recommend,

I. To You in a *special manner that were his Flock and Charge*, be ye Followers of him as he was of Christ Jesus, pray and endeavour after a gracious Spirit, a Judicious, Candid, Humble, Sincere, Affectionate, Serious and Thankful Spirit. This is the Spirit of God, and if such a Spirit leaves you, God himself leaves you.

1. See that you *Govern your Selves by the Spirit of your former Pastor in the Choice of one to Succeed him.* Your present Circumstances, make it an Hour of Temptation to you, you'll be tempted to guide your selves in this Work, by Fancy and Humour, by Interest and partial Affection, by personal Respects or Disrespects; look diligently to your Spirits, and discover such a Temper in this time of Tryal, as is worthy of a People that have Lived so long under such a Ministry.

II. Let it be your earnest Prayer, *that whoever they are that shall Succeed, they may have a double Portion of his Spirit, that has gone before*

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*before them; how Happy a Congregation will you be, if the surviving Eliza's shall come unto you in the Spirit and Power of Elijah, turning the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and of the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, to make ready a People prepared to the Lord.*

2. *I would beg leave to Recommend this to the Ministers of the present Generations, and let none of my Brethren think I take too much upon me, to be their Monitor on this occasion; I do it with this solemn Protestation, that I take my self to be as much concerned in the Advice, and to stand in as much need of it, as any in the World. The Providence of God has laid it in my way, and I must not, I dare not pass it by. Our Reverend Fathers in the Ministry, are too Modest and Humble to recommend themselves as our Examples, it must be done by some amongst our selves, or it must not be done at all; And it is God himself that calls it to it, and let not a Message from God be despised for his Sake that delivers it.*

Let us remember (my Brethren) what an Excellent Spirit our aged Ministers, those Reverend Fathers of ours have been blessed with, and how it has carried them thro' the Duties and Difficulties of their Days, and how Honourable it has made them in the Sight of all that were not downright Enemies to God and Goodness. What a sweet Perfume it has left upon the Names of those of them that are gone, and how desirable it has rendered the Lives of those few that still remain. Let us lift up our hearty Prayers unto God, that a double Portion of that Excellent Spirit may be upon us. There is a great deal of Reason why this should be our Care and Choice.

1. *We are told by those of a different Persuasion, that we mightily fall short of the Piety and Humility of our Predecessors. I could here mention both the Author and the Book, in which the World is told, that the Dissenting Congregations cannot continue long, if the Publick Ministers will but take care to be Diligent in their Work, and Exemplary in their Conversations: For, says he, It was the Sobriety and Sanctimony of the old Puritans, that drew a great many well-minded Men to their Party, who understood nothing*



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of the Merits of the Cause. But their present Ministers have very little of that kind to recommend them to the World; they are generally grown as remiss and vain as others. The Author I refer to, is one of great Fame for Moderation, and one that we are loath to believe, is a real Enemy to any sober sort of Dissenting Protestants; but if it were an Enemy, *fas est & ab hoste doceri*. It concerns us all to take the Matter to Heart, and to inquire what we have done to forfeit the Reputation that those had gained, who have gone before us; and instead of recriminating, and telling our Acusers, that this was the Way and Practice of the *Pharisees* to praise the dead Saints, and persecute the Living. It would be much more Wise and Becoming in us, to double our Diligence and our Watchfulness, that those who now speak against us as Evil Doers, <sup>1 Pet.</sup> may by our good Works, which they shall behold, Glorify God in the <sup>12</sup> Day of their Visitation.

2. If we lose this Excellent Spirit of our aged Ministers, we shall soon find the Want of it in our selves. We shall not be able to do as they have done, nor to suffer as they have suffered; our Work will grow Heavy and Burthensome to us, our Hearts will be Dull and Contracted, we shall want that Peace and Comfort, those inward Supports and Pleasures, which they had in their Days, and by which they were carried thro' their Difficulties without growing weary, or fainting in their Minds.

3. The People to whom we minister, will quickly be sensible of so great a Loss. Sabbaths will not be such sweet and pleasant Days to them, as formerly they have been; the Word of God will not be so Powerful and Precious as it has been; and tho' for some time they may out of Modesty, or personal Respect, or Hopes of the Spirit's Return, keep their troubled Thoughts to themselves, and weep in secret for our Faults and Failings; yet, they will not always be able to keep silent: And how sad a Thing would it be, to hear Aged Experienced Christians complaining of us, that we are not like their old Ministers, that we do not Preach like them, that we do not Pray like them, and that we do not Live like them, that we have not the same Spirit that they had; this would be an unpleasant Sound in our Ears,

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Ears, and a great Temptation to us, to speak no more in the Name of the Lord.

Mr. Baxter's  
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273.

4. *If we have not this Spirit, the Interest of God and Godliness will suffer and sink amongst us.* Professors will grow Careless and Secure, Conversion Work will be at a stand, great Offences and Scandals will arise, our Neglect of the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit will be most justly punished, with the want of the Co-operation and Blessing of the Spirit. Those that least Lament, and least feel this Loss, will suffer the most by it; Those that are filthy, will be filthy still; Persons and Things will grow worse and worse, till the Springs of Grace be shut up, and the Fountains sealed, and the Glory depart from us, and what shall we do in the End thereof? Jer. 5. 31.

5. *It would be very sad, if we should let this good Spirit go, at a time, when we have need of a double Portion of it.* Our Aged and Reverend Fathers have had some Advantages that we have not had, and which can no way be made up to us, but by a double Portion of the Spirit of God. *They were trained up in times of great Strictness and Purity, and in Places of great Light and Knowledge* in the Publick Universities; and that at a time, when Salt was cast into the Fountains to heal and cleanse them; and then it might well be said, they sent forth such Streames as greatly refreshed the City of our God: We have had a more private Education, and tho' some of us have Cause to say, our Advantages were greater than we had Wisdom and Hearts to improve, yet they were not so great as our Predecessors had. This is every Day objected against us; and yet, if we have made the best Use we could of our more private Helps, the Fault and Blame will lie upon those that deprive us of better; however this lays us under a strong Obligation, to get a greater Measure of Spiritual Wisdom and Virtue, to make up our Defects in other Things.

*Our Reverend Fathers had the Advantage of being long trained up in the School of Afflictions; They were scarcely settled in their Work and Stations, but God was pleased for Wise and Holy Ends (tho' to this Day very Dark and Mysterious) to suffer them*



them to be torn away from their Places and People, and thrust into Corners, and often into Prisons; and by this means no doubt God made them more Humble, and more Serious, and Self-denying; the Spirit of God and of Glory rested upon them, and under the Advantages of such a Discipline, those of them that weathered the Storm, returned to their Liberty and Ministry again; but the most of us, have sate at Ease from our Youth, and therefore are in the more danger of settling upon our Lees; the Churches of God amongst us have had Rest for many Years, and the way of Worship which we chuse, has been free, tho' not fashionable in our Time, and if Temptations and Afflictions be of the Number of those Things that make Ministers, we have had but a small Share of them, and therefore stand in the greater need of more immediate Supplies of this good Spirit.

Besides the *Troubles which hitherto we have escaped, do now frequently threaten us, and may very suddenly fall upon us*; And tho' Affliction be a good preparative for Prosperity, yet Prosperity seldom proves a good preparative for Affliction; and therefore instead of neglecting and losing the good Spirit of our Fathers, we have need to Labour for a double Portion of it.

3. *I would recommend this to all young People in General, whether Ministers or others*; Strive to get a double Portion of the Spirit, or Religious Parents and Predecessors. The Eyes of old Disciples are fixed upon the rising Generation, to see what Course they will take, and what Work they will make of it. It is one of the saddest Symptoms of our Days, that in Families formerly eminent for Religion, serious Godliness is turned out of Doors, and a Generation is risen that will not know the God of their Fathers. What is become of the Zeal, the Charity, the Humility, the Spirit of Prayer, that the Generation of Christians are now going off the Stage, has been so much Celebrated for. Certainly, that good Spirit is in a great Measure gone, and Oh, Sirs, fetch it back again! It is a free Spirit, and would return, and visit us, and dwell with us, if we would stir up our selves to take hold of it; it is not yet so far gone from Ministers and others, but it

may be recovered; and that must be done by such Means as these.

1. *We must acquaint our selves with those few aged Servants of God that are still left amongst us.* Let us Converse more with them, and keep close to them, as *Elisba* did to *Elijah*, and not leave them, till they leave us: Let us hold such in great Reputation. Those that slight them, because of their old Age, Infirmities, are never like to possess their good Spirit. God forbid, that any should think they live too long. Their Examples, their Experiences, will be highly Advantagious to us, if we value and improve them as we ought to do. I have already mentioned an Eminent Young Minister, that lived and died a great Ornament to his Profession, *Mr. Wilson of Warwick*; and this is remarkable concerning him, before he undertook a Publick Charge. He desired to spend some time in the Family of the Excellent *Mr. Philip Henry*, and said to a near Relation of his, *He desired to learn Mr. Henry's way of Preaching, and Praying, and Living; and, says he, if God will give me his Spirit, I shall be a Happy Person.* This Desire of his was pleasing to God, he had the Opportunity, and most discernable Advantage by it.

2. *Let us Study the Lives and the Labours of those that are gone.* Let us read the Accounts we have of the Holy Lives and Comfortable Death of God's aged faithful Servants. We may there see what manner of Spirit they were of, and by discerning what their Spirit was, we come to have it our selves. Let us prize their Labours, that are extant amongst us: I am persuaded, if the Good, Sound, Serious, Spiritual Treatises, that our pious Predecessors have left behind them, were valued and studied more, that good Spirit that indited them, would sooner return amongst us. But,

3. *We must remember, that the Residue of the Spirit is with God, and that he has promised to give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him.* Fervent Prayer will be the best Sign that this Spirit is yet with us in some Measure, and will be the best Means of obtaining still more



more of it. The good Spirit we are now speaking of, has been in all God's People, a Spirit of Grace and of Supplication; and if we have not this, which is one of the first Fruits of the Spirit, we cannot expect any of the rest. And,

4. *Let us be sure to consider well in whose Hands God has lodged this good Spirit, and all the Gifts and Graces of it.* Certainly, it is in the Hands of the Lord Jesus Christ, he is made the Head of the Church, and it was fit and necessary, that in him the Spirit should eminently reside to be distributed and communicated by him to all the Parts of his Mystical Body; our Business is therefore firmly to believe this Mystical Head-ship of your Lord Jesus Christ, to secure our Union with him, and to live by Faith in a continual Dependence upon him; and so doing, we shall not only have the Gifts, but the Graces of the Spirit, and thereby be enabled faithfully to serve the Interests of Truth and Holiness while we live, and to recommend and transmit them to others, when we also must go hence, and be *seen* no more.

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